

Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-09 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-10 AGRE-00
AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 CIEP-02 COME-00
DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-04 ERDA-07 FMC-02 TRSE-00
H-02 INR-07 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
NSF-02 OES-06 OMB-01 PA-02 PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 SAL-01 /153 W

-----171007Z 075738/10

P R 170835Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6295
INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
US MISSION UN NEW YORK 869

UNCLAS KUALA LUMPUR 1125

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PLOS, MY, US
SUBJECT: LOS: MALAYSIA STRAITS POSITION

REF: KUALA LUMPUR 1096 (NOTAL)

1. KUALA LUMPUR NEWSPAPERS CARRIED STORIES THIS MORNING (FEB 17) OF PRESS CONFERENCE GIVEN BY LAW MINISTER/ATTORNEY GENERAL TAN SRI KADIR YUSOF YESTERDAY. ACCORDING TO THESE REPORTS, KADIR EXPRESSED OPTIMISM THAT THE MARITIME POWERS WILL SUPPORT MALAYSIA'S AMENDMENTS TO THE RSNT WHICH HAD BEEN INTRODUCED BECAUSE PRESENT PROVISIONS ON "TRANSMIT PASSAGE" INADEQUATELY PROTECT ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF COASTAL STATES. MOST IMPORTANTLY, MALAYSIA DESIRES TO CONTROL THE TRAFFIC OF VERY LARGE

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CRUDE CARRIERS THROUGH AN UNDERKEEL CLEARANCE LIMITATION OF 3.5 METERS. THIS LIMITATION, HE REPORTEDLY SAID, WOULD BE ADEQUATE TO ENSURE A MARGIN OF SAFETY AND THEE WOULD BE NO NEED TO LIMIT TONNAGE. ACCORDING TO THE REPORTS, MALAYSIA HAS "RELAXED" ITS PREVIOUS DEMAND ON PRIOR NOTIFICATION AND JAPANESE TANKER OWNERS HAVE INCREASED THEIR

CONTRIBUTION TO A "REVOLVING FUND" TO DEAL WITH
POLUTION DISASTERS IN THE STRAIT TO US\$1.3 MILLION.

2. KADIR REPORTEDLY SAID THAT A NUMBER OF MARITIME
POWERS SUPPORTED MALAYSIA'S POSITION ON THE NECESSARY
PROVISIONS TO SAFEGUARD THE STRAIT, NOTING THAT
BRITISH AND JAPENSE LOS DELEGATIONS HAD BEEN IN
KUALA LUMPUR TO CONSULT WITH HIM IN THE PAST THREE
WEEKS. HE ALSO IS QUOTED AS ANNOUNCING A VISIT BY
AN AMERICAN DELEGATION ON MARCH 28 AND HIS OWN
TRIPS TO THE ASIAN-AFRICAN LEGAL CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEE MEETING IN BAGHDAD FEB 19-26 AND TO THE
EVANSEN MEETING IN GENEVA FEB 28-MARCH 11. KADIR
SAID THE RUSSIANS HAVE INVITED HIM TO MOSCOW IN
MID-APRIL BUT PRESS REPORTS DID NOT SAY WHETHER HE
WOULD GO.

3. COMMENT. THIS IS THE FIRST PUBLIC STATEMENT
ABOUT THE UKC IN MALAYSIA AND THE FIRST INDICATION
OF AN EVOLVING MALAYSIAN POSITION. KADIR APPARENTLY
SAID NOTHING ABOUT FOREIGN MINISTER RITHAUDDEEN
SIGNING THE TSS IN MAANILA ON FEB 24.
UNDERHILL

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